



*The Messenger*  
Grace United Methodist Church  
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Rev. David E. Smith  
Pastor

*Dedicated to building a strong Christian family for all of God's children, working together for the purpose of putting our faith and love into practice.*

**March 2016**

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR**

### **PAYING THE PRICE**

During the season of Lent we remember the price that Jesus paid that we might be able to know God's amazing love. A love that forgives and offers to us a relationship that provides meaning, direction, and joy for a life that not even the grave can destroy. We remember Christ's triumph over death each Sunday but particularly when we celebrate his resurrection on Easter morning.

To win this glorious prize for us, Jesus endured conflict and suffering. We recall Christ's suffering most vividly on Good Friday when we remember his agonizing death on the cross. The gift Jesus offers is freely given. The acceptance of this gift though, is costly. It requires a willingness to forgo many of the world's pleasures that promise instant gratification. We also need to be willing to let go of anger over the actions of others, to be willing to forgive. Finally we need to let the ways of Jesus be the rule for how we live our lives.

The joy and peace of Easter await all who are willing to engage in the work of unwrapping the gift Jesus offers. The Sunday worship service, Lenten study “Final Words from the Cross”, and the daily devotional “Way Words” are all designed to help you make the journey through Lent, unwrap the gift of God’s amazing love, and experience a life not even the grave can end.

If you want to hear more about this amazing gift Jesus came to offer us, I am always willing to make time to talk with you.

Yours in Christ’s Service,



*David E. Smith*

David E. Smith, Pastor



# MARCH WORSHIP SERVICES

## **3/04 – World Day of Prayer**

Prayer Service – 10am and 7pm

## **3/06 – Fourth Sunday of Lent – One Great Hour of Sharing - Communion**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Affirmation

of Faith: 886 World Methodist Social Affirmation

Theme: Jesus seeks to transform us so we can transform others and realize God's Kingdom.

Sermon: Transformed

Hymns: 133 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms  
618 Let Us Break Bread Together  
2130 The Summons

## **3/13 – Fifth Sunday of Lent – Girl Scout Sunday – Daylight Savings**

Scripture: Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

Litany for Girl Scout Sunday

Theme: Christ calls us to more perfectly reflect him.

Sermon: The Best is Yet to Come

Hymns: 2164 Sanctuary  
394 Something Beautiful  
297 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

## **3/20 – Palm Sunday**

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 19:28-40

Responsive

Reading: #764 - Psalm 31:9-16

Theme: Sacrificial love is the basis for true power.

Sermon: True Strength

Hymns: 279 Filled with Excitement  
292 What Wondrous Love  
338 Where He Leads Me

### **3/24 – Maundy Thursday – Communion**

6pm – Covered Dish

7pm – Maundy Thursday Service

Scripture: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Theme: Empowered by the sacrificial love of Jesus, love one another.

Sermon: The Word is Love

Hymns: 2254 In Remembrance of Me  
432 Jesu, Jesu

### **3/25 – Good Friday**

Prayer Service at Grace UMC – Noon-3pm

Ecumenical Service at Riverview Baptist – 7pm – Pastor Guest Preacher

Seven Words from the Cross

### **3/27 – Easter Sunrise Service**

6:30am – Sunrise Service

7:15am – Easter Breakfast

Scripture: Luke 24:1-12

Theme: The unbelievable is true, death has been defeated.

Meditation: Unbelievably Great News

Hymns: 302 Christ the Lord is Risen  
310 He Lives (v 1-2)

### **3/27 – Easter Service - Communion**

Scripture: Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18

Theme: Salvation is for All

Meditation: A Message for All Creation

Hymns: 302 Christ the Lord is Risen Today  
641 Fill My Cup, Lord  
572 Pass It On

## EARLY SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE Revised

Based on feedback, Pastor David is revising the format of the 8am Sunday morning service. The new service will take the following format:

Words of Welcome  
Opening Hymn  
Scripture Lesson  
Meditation  
Prayers of the People  
Offering  
Closing Hymn  
Blessing

It is anticipated that the service will be 30 minutes in length. If you have comments or suggestions for this service please feel free to contact the pastor.

The format for the Thursday evening service will continue in its present format for now but Pastor David is open to suggestions for it as well. The intention for the Thursday evening service is an informal service where those new to or with questions about traditional Christian worship could feel comfortable asking questions.



## LAY VISITATION PROGRAM TO SHUT-INS

Jan Bradshaw and Phyllis Shook just finished a 16-hour, two-day course on Lay Visitation offered by Upper New York Annual Conference. They are both enthusiastic about what they learned and putting their learning to use in Grace United Methodist Church.

It is their hope that they can share their knowledge with others interested in working with them and the pastor in offering training and establishing an active Lay Visitation Program. We are eager to hear from those eager to begin this ministry and those who are currently involved in visiting our shut-ins. This program has the potential of being an effective tool in expanding our outreach to shut-ins.

**If you are interested, please contact the pastor so we can be in contact with you as we begin this important ministry.**





## NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR!

We are very blessed to welcome JoAnna Cochenet-Gallastegui as our new music director throughout the coming months and throughout the summer. She will be accompanied by Adrienne Seymour who has been our acting music director. (Thank you, Adrienne!) In addition to the senior choir, JoAnna plans to work with the children's choir and the bell choir.

JoAnna is the Conductor of the Northeast String Orchestra in Clifton Park. She majored in viola and violin. Those who were present in church on February 21<sup>st</sup> got to hear her play exquisitely before the congregation.

In addition to JoAnna's conductor talents at work in Clifton Park, she often serves as a guest conductor across the United States. If you'd like to read more about her accomplishments, you can check out her website: <http://www.joannacochenet.com>

Please join me in welcoming JoAnna and please do introduce yourself.

## BARGAIN SHED NEWS

**SATURDAY, APRIL 9<sup>th</sup>** – is the opening date for the Bargain Shed. And we are looking forward to another great year.

We hope you've been saving your donations for us. Those items are what make us successful! Some of the things we sell in the shop are:

- Clothes (men's, women's, kid's)
- Shoes
- Handbags
- Jewelry
- Accessories
- Housewares
- Small Appliances
- Linens
- Dishes
- Glassware
- Toys
- Home Décor
- Small Furniture Pieces
- Lamps

It is requested that donated items be clean and in good working order.  
**Please note: WE DO NOT ACCEPT TVs, COMPUTERS OR EXERCISE EQUIPMENT.**



## FEBRUARY'S ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

We covered a lot of ground at the February meeting. We discussed our roofing renovation (scope of work) at length to be sure that any contractors who bid will know exactly what specifications we have for the project. We have a portion of the funds available now, although a loan must be secured to complete this major renovation.

A dollar amount was settled upon to purchase some much-needed updates for our sound system; we will soon be able to produce CD's instead of cassette tapes (a blast from the past!) And, although it may seem premature, we need some folks to chair the Fall Fair this year.

We discussed upcoming study groups, Friends around the Fireplace, the prayer blanket ministry, organized shelving downstairs for the Book Nook, and so much more, while still honoring our 9pm hard stop. The next meeting will be on **March 8<sup>th</sup>** – please join us!



## BOOK NOOK UPDATE

Our spring **Huge Book Sale and Mini-Rummage Sale** is fast approaching. Again, those dates are **March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>**.

Any help you can offer up with the organizing, carrying books up and downstairs and setting up would be greatly appreciated. We will begin bringing up books from downstairs and setting up Fellowship Hall on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup> (9am – 3pm); Sunday after church and also on Monday and Tuesday until finished.

Don't forget...if you just *happen* to be doing some spring cleaning and run across some books or rummage sale items that you can part with, we would love to have them for the sale.

The Book Nook YTD total sales figure as of February 21<sup>st</sup> was **\$1,614!**

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

We had another successful Spaghetti Dinner on February 20<sup>th</sup> with over 78 dinners served. There were so many who contributed to the event: helping with publicity, making centerpieces, ordering and picking up the meatballs, buying and baking the brownies, our hosts and wait staff, cooks and clean up



crew. Everyone's work paid off; we made **\$874!** Thank you to everyone that contributed in any way!



## FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The other day, Kate Robertson was driving in Albany with Sam who saw a homeless man standing on the opposite side of the highway. Sam asked "When will our bags be ready?"

They're done! Thanks to our generous congregation, on Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, the Sunday School children packed 23 bags with toiletries, snacks, gloves, socks and scarves for our "Blessing Bags" which will be distributed to the homeless. Each Sunday School family will be given a bag to keep in their car to hand out to an individual in need.

Kate's kids are already talking about how they are planning to fill a new bag once they give their first bag away. We hope your children are inspired to do the same! Kate commented "I am always amazed at how much our congregation donates to all of our projects. THANK YOU for helping us make a difference."





On Saturday, **March 19<sup>th</sup>** the Sunday School will be hosting its **Annual Game Night**. Bring a dish and join us for a potluck dinner at **5:30pm** and stay to play board games afterward. Bring your favorite games and be ready for some friendly competition!

Following church on **Easter Sunday**, we will be having our Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Please help support this fun tradition by bringing in a bag of candy, stickers or pennies that we can use to stuff the eggs. A box will be located outside the office to collect your donations. We'll be looking for extra hands to fill the eggs the week before, as well as to hide the eggs on Easter morning. Weather permitting; we'll have our egg hunt outdoors. Thank you!

Please remember to submit your college student's address to Kate Robertson at [rarksr@gmail.com](mailto:rarksr@gmail.com) so that they can receive a care box before the end of the term.

## TAX INFO

Just a reminder that if you still need a statement of your donations to Grace UMC for 2015, please see Harriet Marple and she will be happy to supply that for you.

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to all those celebrating a March birthday or anniversary!

6 Fran Lobdell  
13 Dotty Backlund  
14 Sandy Racey  
16 Logan Moss  
19 Vera Mahnken  
20 Erick Mattick  
21 Ray & Jan Bradshaw  
21 Emily Buckley-Crist  
26 Mary Alice Van Wie  
27 Joseph Bliss  
29 James June



## IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE APRIL ISSUE OF THE MESSENGER

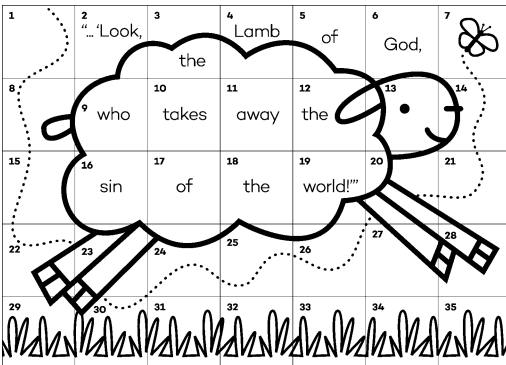
I will be unavailable to work on *The Messenger* on my normal schedule (the week of March 20<sup>th</sup>), so I am requesting an earlier submission date for any articles going into the April issue.

Please think ahead of any events you are planning for the month of April that the congregation would want to know about. I will need submissions to me by **March 13<sup>th</sup>** which is only **two weeks** away!

Be sure that your event or information doesn't get left out!

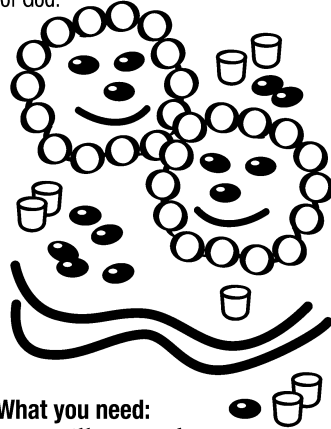
– Barb Bullock

## ANSWER TO PUZZLE (ON PAGE 11)



## LITTLE LAMBS

Make these cute treats as a reminder that Jesus our Savior is also the Lamb of God.



### What you need:



- Vanilla cupcakes
- Vanilla frosting
- Butter knife
- Mini marshmallows
- Jellybeans
- Red licorice

### What you do:

1. Bake and frost the cupcakes.
2. Place marshmallows around the edge of each cupcake.
3. Cut green or blue jellybeans in half and place two on each cupcake as eyes. Cut pink jellybeans in half and place one below each pair of eyes as a nose.
4. Cut thin strips of licorice, and place one on each cupcake as a mouth.
5. Enjoy!

# PUZZLE

## Lamb of God

 John the Baptist knew Jesus was the Messiah —  and offered a special greeting when he saw Jesus.

*Directions: Cut apart the squares and arrange them in a rectangle in numerical order, starting with #1 in the top left and going across to #7. Continue building four more rows of seven squares each, to reveal John 1:29, NIV.*

1	2	25	4	30	16
8	33	27	12	23	18
29	6	32	20	10	34
24	17	5	19	22	11
3	31	26	9	13	15
14	7	28	35	21	

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## **JOIN US ON FACEBOOK**

If you are on Facebook, please join the church page by *liking us* at Grace United Methodist Church, Ravena, NY. Find out what's happening each week from Sunday's Service sermon title and hymns to meetings and special events.

## **OR VISIT US ON THE WEB:**

[www.graceumcravena.org](http://www.graceumcravena.org)



Deadline for articles for the **April** issue of *The Messenger* is **March 13<sup>th</sup>**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

[bbullock812@gmail.com](mailto:bbullock812@gmail.com)

or

fax to: **731-8994**